

'Money spent on research should reach common man'

Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE: Central and State governments were spending heavily on science and research but the benefits hardly reached the common man, according to Vishwa Mohan Katoch, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

For a nation of 100-crore-plus people, public benefit should be the priority, he said on Monday at the inauguration of Molecular Diagnostics, Counselling, Care and Research Centre (MDCRC), Avinashilingam Deemed University for Women.

"There is no paucity of talent or money. What is lacking is coordination; scientists and research institutions should not be islands. Instead, they should work together. And there ought to be a long-term goal with national interest in mind."

Commending the work the centre had accomplished thus far, he said the registry it was building should serve the nation in the long run. And it would be better if it included not only muscular dystrophy details but also other disorders.

Mr. Katoch, who is also the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, said the centre should also work on the area of therapy and suggested that it also look



Vishwa Mohan Katoch (second right), Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, inaugurating Molecular Diagnostics, Counselling, Care and Research Centre (MDCRC) at Avinashilingam Deemed University for Women in Coimbatore on Monday. (From left) Clinical consultant of MDCRC Thilothammal, Head of MDCRC B.R. Lakshmi, Special Secretary of Health Department S. Vijayakumar and Chancellor of the University T.K. Shanmuganandam are in the picture. — PHOTO: K. ANANTHAN

at Indian medicine systems. "Keep an open mind," he added.

Outreach programme

S. Vijayakumar, Project Director, Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project, said the State Government was happy to recognise the MDCRC as a 'Referral Centre for Molecular Diagnostics and Counselling Centre for Muscular Dystrophy and Spinal Muscular Atrophy.'

MDCRC's location at the

Avinashilingam University was apt because the latter's outreach programme would aid all that the former was planning to do. He also asked the centre to come up with a website in vernacular language for the benefit of the public.

T.K. Shanmuganandam, Chancellor, Avinashilingam Deemed University for Women, said the institution was keen on adopting projects like the MDCRC and extending the same for the benefit of

the community.

The project envisioned was not just on diagnostics but for a holistic and integrated approach to serve the population with national and international relevance.

MDCRC would also "sensitise our students on the community need and reach the people and help instil lifelong service mentality among our children." B.R. Lakshmi, Head, MDCRC, spoke on the vision and mission of the centre.